



News Release

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Some immunocompromised individuals should receive four doses of COVID-19 vaccine

People who are immunocompromised are especially vulnerable to COVID-19

OLYMPIA – A fourth dose of COVID-19 vaccine can help some people with weakened immune systems be less likely to catch COVID-19 and get severely ill. Certain individuals who are immunocompromised may receive up to four doses of COVID-19 vaccine, which includes two primary doses of an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), an additional primary dose, and a booster dose.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends people ages 5 and older who are [moderately or severely immunocompromised](#) should get an additional primary shot (third dose) of an mRNA vaccine 28 days after receiving their second dose. An additional primary shot may prevent serious and possibly life-threatening COVID-19 in people who may not have responded well to their two-dose mRNA COVID-19 vaccine primary series. Currently, no additional primary shot is recommended for people who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Everyone 12 years of age and older, including immunocompromised people, should get a [booster shot](#) when they are eligible. Those who received Pfizer or Moderna should get a booster 5 months after completing their primary series and people who received the single-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine should get a booster 2 months after their first dose.

“COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, but some immunocompromised individuals don’t get strong enough immunity following their initial two-dose series,” said Dr. Tao Sheng Kwan-Gett, MD, MPH, Chief Science Officer. “Receiving an additional primary dose and a booster dose will help protect those who are more susceptible to the disease. Getting everyone up to date

on all vaccine doses they are eligible to receive can also help protect the most vulnerable in our communities.”

According to the CDC, people are considered moderately or severely immunocompromised if they have:

- Been receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood.
- Received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system.
- Received a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system.
- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome).
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection.
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress their immune system.

People should talk to their trusted healthcare provider about their medical condition, and whether getting an additional primary shot is appropriate for them. For more information, visit the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) section of the Washington State Department of Health’s website.

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